

Influence Benson Based Relaxation Zikr to Decreasing Anxiety Levels in Third Trimester Pregnant Women at PMB Yuni Nur Astuti

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Abstract: **Background:** Pregnancy causes physiological and psychological changes, including anxiety triggered by increased cortisol levels. In Indonesia, approximately 28.7% of pregnant women experience anxiety, while in Java Island, 52.3% of third-trimester pregnant women are reported to feel anxious. Zikr-based Benson relaxation is a non-pharmacological method that can help reduce anxiety by activating the parasympathetic nervous system and lowering cortisol levels. **Objective:** To determine the effect of zikr-based Benson relaxation on reducing anxiety levels in third-trimester pregnant women at PMB Yuni Nur Astuti. **Methods:** This study used a pre-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest approach. The sample consisted of 22 third-trimester pregnant women selected using consecutive sampling. The zikr-based Benson relaxation intervention was conducted for three consecutive days, with a duration of 15 minutes per day. Anxiety levels were measured using the Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS) and analyzed using the Wilcoxon test. **Results:** The respondents' anxiety levels decreased from 54.5% moderate anxiety and 45.5% mild anxiety to 59.1% no anxiety and 40.9% mild anxiety. Statistical analysis showed a p-value of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** Zikr-based Benson relaxation has a significant effect on reducing anxiety levels in third-trimester pregnant women at PMB Yuni Nur Astuti.

Keywords: anxiety, pregnant women, zikr-based Benson relaxation

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Introduction

Pregnancy is a physiological process accompanied by physical, psychological, and emotional changes. These changes require mothers to adapt, increasing the risk of anxiety, especially in the third trimester when mothers begin to face physical discomfort, prepare for childbirth, and worry about the safety of themselves and their fetus (Tuxunjiang et al., 2023; Nurlatifah et al., 2024). Untreated anxiety can impact the health of both mother and fetus, such as impaired fetal growth, prolonged labor, and an increased risk of pregnancy complications (Herlina, Ulyab, & Pricilia, 2023). Anxiety in pregnant women remains a health problem. The WHO reports that approximately 8–10% of pregnant women worldwide experience anxiety, while in Indonesia the prevalence reaches 28.7% before delivery (Harnum & Meinarissa, 2024; Annisa & Shariff, 2025). A preliminary study conducted at the Yuni Nur Astuti Prenatal Care Center in January 2026 on 10 pregnant women in their third trimester using the Prenatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS) showed that 60% of respondents experienced moderate anxiety, 20% mild anxiety, and 20% severe anxiety. This indicates that anxiety in pregnant women in their third trimester still requires effective and safe management.

One non-pharmacological intervention that can be used is the dhikr-based Benson relaxation technique. This technique combines breath relaxation with a spiritual approach through repeated dhikr, thus stimulating the relaxation response, reducing sympathetic nervous system activity, and increasing psychological calm (Jannah, 2023; Robaiyani et al., 2024). Previous research has shown that Benson relaxation is effective in reducing anxiety levels in third-trimester pregnant women. However, research combining Benson relaxation with a spiritual approach, such as dhikr, in midwives' independent practice is still limited, so its effectiveness requires further study. Based on these issues, this study aims to analyze the effect of dhikr-based Benson relaxation on reducing anxiety levels in third-trimester pregnant women at the Yuni Nur Astuti Prenatal Care Center (PMB). The results are expected to provide scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of this intervention and serve as a reference for midwives in developing complementary midwifery care to reduce anxiety in pregnant women.

Method

Study This is study quantitative with design pre-experimental use approach one-group pretest- posttest design. Study aim for analyze influence Benson -based relaxation dhikr to decline level anxiety in mothers third trimester of pregnancy. Measurement level anxiety done before (pretest) and after (posttest) administration intervention.

Study held at PMB Yuni Nur Astuti, District Polokarto, Regency Sukoharjo, in April 2026. Population study is all over Mother pregnant women in their third trimester who are doing visit Antenatal Care (ANC) at PMB Yuni Nur Astuti during period research. Research sample A total of 22 respondents were selected use technique consecutive sampling in accordance criteria inclusion, namely Mother third trimester pregnant with level anxiety light until currently based on instrument Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS), Muslim, and willing become respondents research. Respondents who have disturbance soul, in the middle undergo therapy pharmacological for anxiety, or No follow intervention in a way complete issued from study.

Data collected use questionnaire The Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS) has been own good validity and reliability, as well as sheet observation for monitor implementation intervention. Intervention in the form of Benson -based relaxation dhikr given for 15 minutes, once a day during three day consecutively, consisting of on One session guided and two sessions independent using audio guidance. Anxiety levels were measured before the intervention on the first day and after the entire intervention series was completed.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS software. Univariate analysis was used to describe the characteristics of respondents and the distribution of anxiety levels before and after the intervention in the form of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Bivariate analysis used the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test to determine differences in anxiety levels before and after the administration of the dhikr-based Benson relaxation with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. This study has received ethical approval from the Health Research Ethics Committee, and all respondents provided written informed consent before participating in the study. Confidentiality of respondents' identities was maintained throughout the research process.

Results and Discussion

This study involved 22 pregnant women in their third trimester who met the inclusion criteria. Anxiety levels were measured using the Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS) before and after a three-day dhikr-based Benson relaxation intervention. Before the intervention, the majority of respondents (12 respondents (54.5%) experienced moderate anxiety, while 10 respondents (45.5%) experienced mild anxiety. No respondents were in the no anxiety or severe anxiety categories. After receiving the Benson relaxation technique based on dhikr, the majority of respondents (13 respondents) were in the no-anxiety category, while 9 respondents (40.9%) were in the mild anxiety category. There were no further respondents experiencing moderate or severe anxiety. The statistical distribution shows that the median anxiety level decreased from 2 (range 1–2) before the intervention to 0 (range 0–1) after the intervention, indicating a decrease in anxiety levels in most respondents.

The analysis results using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a Z value of -4.134 with a significance value of $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate a significant difference between anxiety levels before and after the administration of the Benson relaxation based on dhikr. This study shows that most pregnant women in their third trimester experienced moderate anxiety before receiving intervention. This indicates that anxiety remains a common psychological issue prior to delivery. Entering the third trimester, pregnant women face various physical and emotional changes, such as increased discomfort, concerns about the delivery process, the baby's safety, and readiness to assume the role of mother. This condition aligns with the theory that hormonal, psychological, and social changes are the main factors influencing anxiety in pregnant women in their third trimester (Sholihat, 2025).

After receiving the dhikr-based Benson relaxation technique, most respondents experienced a decrease in anxiety levels to the point of no anxiety. This decrease indicates that the dhikr-based Benson relaxation technique can help pregnant women manage their psychological responses leading up to labor. The Benson relaxation technique works through breath regulation, which activates the parasympathetic nervous system, thereby suppressing sympathetic nervous system activity, lowering heart rate, blood pressure, and stress hormone production. The integration of dhikr as a spiritual approach helps improve concentration, calm, and surrender, thereby strengthening the resulting relaxation response (Jannah, 2023; Robaiyani et al., 2024).

The Wilcoxon test results showed a p-value of 0.001, indicating a significant effect of dhikr-based Benson relaxation on reducing anxiety levels in pregnant women in the third trimester. This finding aligns with research by Ermeida Nelli (2023) which demonstrated that Benson relaxation effectively reduces anxiety in pregnant women in the third trimester. Research by Harnum and Meinariissa (2024) also reported that routinely administering Benson relaxation for 10–15 minutes significantly reduced anxiety in pregnant women approaching labor. These similar results

reinforce the idea that Benson relaxation is an effective non-pharmacological intervention in improving the psychological well-being of pregnant women.

Although anxiety decreased in most respondents, nine remained in the mild anxiety category after the intervention. These differences in response are likely influenced by individual factors, such as coping skills, pregnancy experiences, family support, and the psychological condition of each respondent, all of which could not be fully controlled for in this study. Therefore, the dhikr-based Benson relaxation technique can be considered a complementary intervention in antenatal care to help reduce anxiety in pregnant women in the third trimester in a safe, easy-to-implement, and spiritually appropriate manner.

Table 1. Frequency of Anxiety Levels Before Intervention

Level Anxiety	Frequency	Presentation (%)
No There is anxiety (0-9)	0	0.0
Anxiety light (10-16)	10	45.5
Anxiety medium (17-29)	12	54.5
Anxiety weight (30-63)	0	0.0
Total	22	100.0

Table 2. Frequency of Anxiety Levels After Intervention

Level Anxiety	Frequency	Presentation (%)
No There is anxiety (0-9)	13	59.1
Anxiety light (10-16)	9	40.9
Anxiety medium (17-29)	0	0.0
Anxiety weight (30-63)	0	0.0
Total	22	100.0

Table 3. Statistical Distribution of Anxiety Levels Before and After Intervention

Anxiety Level	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Before (Pretest)	2	1	2
After (Posttest)	0	0	1

Conclusion

Study This show that giving Benson -based relaxation dhikr contribute in lower level anxiety in mothers third trimester of pregnancy. Intervention This help increase condition psychological Mother from level more anxiety tall become more adaptive approaching childbirth, so that objective study for analyze influence Benson -based relaxation dhikr to decline level anxiety can achieved. Findings This strengthen that combination technique relaxation and spiritual approach are intervention non-pharmacological that is effective, safe, and easy implemented as part from care midwifery complementary. Based on findings said, Benson relaxation is based on dhikr recommended for considered as one of the intervention supporters in antenatal care for Mother third trimester of pregnancy. Research furthermore recommended use design study with group control, amount more samples big, and consider other factors that can influence anxiety, such as support family, characteristics mother, and condition psychosocial, so that obtained proof more scientific strong about effectiveness intervention this.

Declaration of Generative AI

The authors declare that this manuscript was independently written without the use of generative AI or automated content-generation tools.

Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to all research phases, from study design and data analysis to manuscript preparation and approval of the final version.

Conflict of Interests Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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Data Availability

The dataset used during the current study is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Informed Consent

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the study.

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